

THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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IT was New Year's Eve, and Simple Simon was very busy stirring up a New Year's cake. He worked by the light of the fire for there was only one candle in the house, a fine new big one, and it must be saved for

the New Year's party. Yes, Simple Simon was giving all the children of Windy-Low a New Year's party that night, and they were coming to welcome the New Year in. It meant that they would sit up until twelve o'clock, a very late hour for children to be out of their beds, but then it was certain not to happen again soon. The parents had promised that they would come after them at the right time. Simple Simon had arranged everything, and now he was smiling away to himself as he mixed the cake in a big bowl.

The cake was to be a big one, as big as the little oven on the hearth would hold. And just before it went into the oven Simple Simon was going to drop into the batter a penny from the money bag on his arm. This would be a lucky penny and bring good luck all the new year to the child who found it in his piece of cake. How happy the child would be who found this lucky penny!

Now Simple Simon lifted a spoonful of cake batter and let it drop slowly back into the bowl. Yes, it was just right. Not too thick and not too thin—just right. He went to the hearth and drew the oven back so that it would not be too hot when the batter was poured in. He greased the inside with a bacon rind so that the cake would not stick. Then he took the bag from his arm and felt for a penny.

It was quite empty—not a penny was in it! To make sure, Simple Simon turned the bag upside down and then inside out. Not a penny fell out—not one.

"And I was sure that there were

SIMPLE SIMON'S NEW YEAR CAKE

By May Justus



a good many pennies in the bag," mourned Simple Simon. "I was sure that I had not spent nearly all my money. It must be that I have lost them. Yes, I am sure that I have, for I have not spent any money for a long time."

Poor Simple Simon looked quite blue over this piece of ill luck, and no wonder. He was too poor to lose even one penny, let alone a number of them. But he remembered that it was New Year's Eve and that the children were coming to his house for a party. They must have the cake anyway, penny or no penny. There could be no lucky piece now, but then it could not be helped, and perhaps the children would not mind so much after all.

So he gave the batter an extra stir or two and poured it carefully into the oven. Then he took the oven lid from the fire with a pair of hooks and set it gently in place. There! The cake was in to bake and there was nothing to do but sit before the fire and watch that it might not burn. In a few minutes Simple Simon lifted the lid and peeped in to see how it was coming on.

"Oh, but it's going to be a fine cake," he said happily. "A beautiful cake, a delicious cake! It will make the children's mouths water just to look at it. And when they see what an extraordinary cake it is they will not care so much about its not having a lucky piece in it."

In a few more minutes he lifted the lid from the oven again. Now it had risen almost to the top and was getting a lovely brown color all over. Then Simple Simon put the lid back in place but he left a tiny crack so that it might not burn on top while it finished baking on the inside.

After a while he lifted the lid again. "It looks as if it were done," he thought, and then he knelt down by the oven and put his ear close to it to see if he could hear a singing sound. As long as a cake is not quite done it sings, but it is such a little, little song that one must listen quite closely to hear it. Now Simple Simon listened to hear the song of the cake but he could not hear it, so he knew for certain that it was done, even in the middle. He took the hooks and drew it back from the fire to cool. He poked up the fire that he might better see how nicely it had baked. And oh, the delightful smell that filled the room! There was sugar and spice and everything nice in that delicious smell, and Simple Simon sniffed his nose full of it as he bent above the oven.

A little later he got the broom and swept up the hearth. Then he tidied



"Not a penny fell out—not one."

the rest of the room. He wanted everything to look nice when the children came. There was only the one chair, but there were plenty of evergreen boughs left over from the Christmas decorations, and these he piled here and there for the children to sit or lie down upon. Next he carried from the woodpile a big back-log for the fire. The little flames welcomed it with a cackle and a crackle and soon all the room was a-glow with the mellow light of it. The fine big candle was brought out and set in the middle of the table all ready for lighting when the time should come.

And then suddenly all the children were there—Letty Ann, little Tobe Ellison, and all the rest. They came in with a rush and cries of "Happy New Year, Simple Simon, Happy New Year!" The old cabin playhouse seemed full of music as they laughed and talked. They stood around the fire and warmed their fingers and toes, casting suspicious glances at the oven in the corner, but they were too polite to ask questions even when a delightful whiff came up into their faces.

Soon they were warm enough to start playing games. Of course they had to play all the old games tonight because it was the very last night of the old year. This took a long time. They played Chicken McCraney Crow, William Trimble Toe, 'Leven Hand, Club Fist and a lot of others. After they had played all the games they knew to play, Simple Simon had to tell stories. He told them all the old tales that they liked best: The Pig Who Went to London Town, Jack and the Bean Stalk, Cinderella, and The Tale of the Little Red Hen. Then Simple Simon told them that he had made up a new fiddle piece which he called

"Songs of Windy-Low."

Then he took the old red fiddle from the cabin wall and played it for them. Such a merry, laughing song they had never heard before. In it one might hear so many things—the song of the wind in the trees, the talk and laughter of children at play, the humming of an old rusty teakettle and the chirping song of a cricket. As the children listened they forgot everything but the music until they heard a sound and looked up. There on the mantel the old clock was striking twelve.

"The New Year! The New Year!" they all cried.

Simple Simon put down the fiddle and lit the candle with a pine splinter from the fire. Then he took the New Year cake from the oven and placed it by the candle on the table where every child could see. And oh, but it was a joy to hear and see them!

"There'll be a lucky piece. Some one will get the lucky piece!" they cried, as Simple Simon began to cut the cake. He started to tell them that there would be no lucky piece in this cake, and then he decided to wait until they were eating

before he told them the sad news. Perhaps they would not mind so much then.

A moment later there was a glad cry: "I have the penny—I have found the lucky piece!"

And then another child cried: "I have a penny, too! I have a penny, too!"

Simple Simon found it hard to believe his own ears, for it seemed that all the children were shouting over lucky pennies they had found in their pieces of cake. He simply could not understand it. He knew quite well that he had not found a single penny in the bag when he had looked—no, not even when he had turned it inside out. All the pennies had been lost from the bag before.

Then Simple Simon had a sudden thought, and he laughed aloud. Of course he had lost the pennies from the bag! It had become untied and the pennies had fallen into the cake batter while he was stirring it. In the dim light of the fire he had not noticed them. In the noise of the stirring spoon he had not heard them fall. Yes, it was very easy to see how it had all happened now. And Simple Simon laughed aloud again.

"What are you laughing about?" the children asked him, but he didn't tell them. He thought it a good joke to have

lost his pennies in this way and have them found in a New-Year cake. He was sure that it meant good luck for him all the year round. But this was a little secret he wished to keep to himself—and he did.

Soon all the cake was eaten. Soon the parents came after their children, and they went back up Windy-Low trail holding their New-Year pennies in their hands. Then Simple Simon sat down by the fire and laughed again.

"It was a fine party," he said to himself, or it might have been to the friendly teakettle. "It was a grand party. I'm not sorry that I lost all my pennies in the cake. I'm glad that I did it by mistake since I didn't do it on purpose. I'm glad that it was such a good cake and that everybody got a lucky piece of it. Now I think I'll wish myself a happy New Year and go to bed."

A little while later Simple Simon was asleep and dreaming. The big log rolled from its place in the back of the chimney and settled close to the teakettle. The shadows crept out of the cabin corners and huddled about the hearth, and the little crickets from hidden places tuned up in a New-Year song.

Chad Checks Up

By Bayard Daniel York

WILBUR CHADWICK leaned back and scowled at the sheet of paper before him.

"I never *was* good at mathematics," he muttered.

He was trying to "add" the following items—

Credit	Debit
Won my school letter.	Slumped in my studies.
Am in with Red and his crowd.	Went back on Jimmy.
Slated for class president.	Sis calls me a "climber."

He felt that the lefthand column gave the larger total, but for some reason he was not satisfied. For one thing that "went back on Jimmy" bothered him.

Rather aimlessly he sketched the numerals—

1929-1930

He glanced at his watch. The new year was just ten hours old.

From the street below the windows came an increasing babel of sounds—shouts, bells, and the honking of a hoarse-throated horn.

"Ho, Chad! All out for Baldy!"

"Baldy" was the great round-topped hill to the north of the city. At present it was covered with snow in perfect condition for coasting; and it was the horn on "Red" Halliday's coaster which was calling Chad so insistently.

He raised the window.

"Greetings!" he called down. "Happy New Year and all that. I'll be right down. Watch the front door—you'll spy me coming out of it!"

In the hall he met Edith.

"Coming, Sis?" he asked.

"I'll be along later," she said. "Helen and Jimmy are going to stop for me."

Chad drew on his jacket and adjusted his muffler precisely.

"Don't break the speed laws in Jimmy's old ark of a coaster," he remarked.

Jimmy's sled was a drab affair, substantial and dependable, but lacking the color and speed of Red's giant or Chad's smaller but equally fast coaster.

"All right, Mr. Smart-chap," Edith replied, with a toss of her head. "We may not travel as fast as some folks do—but we usually arrive just the same!"

"Ha-ha!" said Chad.

The crowd outside greeted him noisily—and with the jangle of bells and much sounding the horn, they were off toward the hill that towered impressively just outside the city limits.

Like everything else about Red, his coaster attracted attention. It was painted brilliantly in red and black and the back of it was ornamented with a skull and cross-bones, leering back, as Red put it, "at the chap who's getting my dust."

Chad's sled was blue with silver lightning-flash zigzagging along each side.

"Just the thing for the fastest coaster in town," he remarked, as they came to the top of the hill.

"Where do you get that 'fastest' stuff from?" Red demanded.

"Why—it's history," Chad said with a grin.

"Ancient history, maybe!" Red replied. "I'm talking about this bright new year."

"Oh, you mean the new year," Chad murmured. "Well—let's find out who's who in 1930."

Red waved a hand toward the east slope of the hill.

"It looks smooth and inviting over there," he said. "Too bad the river's down there at the foot."

Chad looked down at the swirling water which froze only in the coldest weather, and nodded.

"The east slope is the steeper," he stated, "but it's out of the question even when the river freezes—there's a ten or fifteen foot drop at the bottom."

Chad and Red took their places on their coasters and the others dropped on behind them. The two sleds started together, gathered speed rapidly, and shot away down the smooth southern slope of the hill.

Half way down they met Jimmy and his crowd and waved as they sped past.

At the bottom Chad rolled off.

"You see there's nothing to it," he cried. "Why—I could come down with my coaster empty and beat yours, filled."

Red essayed a laugh, although he was obviously chagrined by the fact that Chad had finished some twenty feet ahead of him.

"You *are* crazy," he remarked. "I've been suspecting it all this year—now I know it! Well, come on and have it over with."

They reached the top just as Jimmy was ready to start down. Jimmy was a fair-sized sled-load all by himself. There was some argument as to whether he weighed two hundred pounds or merely one hundred and ninety-nine—Jimmy himself insisted violently that the larger figure was correct and that he came in the "two-century" class.

He had waved as Chad went by—but his eyes were on the gleaming path down the hill.

A year ago, Chad and Jimmy were running a fine large coaster together—the "Overland Limited." The "Limited" lost out one day in a short but impressive argument with a tree. The accident was Chad's fault and he had never made it right with Jimmy.

Chad turned to Red.

"Pick out the heaviest people you can find," he suggested. "The more weight you have, the faster you'll travel. Perhaps you can almost keep up with me!"

"Humph!" Red snorted.

As they started Chad realized that they were making a mistake. Jimmy's slow sled was a short distance ahead—it would be necessary to pass it on the rather narrow path at high speed.

He also realized quickly that he had been too confident of the powers of his



To My Scout

By SUSIE AIKEN WINOLD

Good morning, Scout, open your eyes of blue,

You're twelve today, with a dream come true!

No longer a "Cub," but a Scout full fledged,

To serve your country's flag, you're pledged.

Arise, my Scout, there is work to do,
To be friendly, helpful and loyal, too;
To be courteous, obedient, cheery always,
Not merely to win a large meed of praise.

Go forward, Scout, and keep the laws
Of God and man, and remember the cause
Of both needs those who can bravely stand

Alone, if need be, with no helping hand.

Success, my Scout, along life's way,
As you remember that on each day,
One kind turn, at least, you do,
And rich reward will be meted to you
My Scout!

own coaster. Red's heavily-loaded sled began to pull ahead steadily.

About half way down, the coasting path ran very close to the ridge which separated the two slopes of the hill and then curved sharply back again. Jimmy was rounding this curve when Red attempted to pass him. For an instant both sleds were aimed at exactly the same point. Red sounded his horn; but either Jimmy did not hear it or he felt that he was already as close to the ridge as it was safe to go.

Chad, speeding downward some yards

back, shouted a useless warning. There was a crash as Red's sled shot past and Jimmy's struck the side of it. Red's coaster swerved from the path and lurched dangerously—then shot on as if nothing had happened.

But Jimmy had been less fortunate. The force of the collision had knocked the front of his sled sharply to the east. As it went up over the ridge, everyone rolled off except Jimmy—who seemed to grasp the steering-bar tightly.

The next instant Jimmy and the coaster were shooting forward down the east slope of the hill.

(To be concluded)

Winter Policemen and Their Duties

By M. LOUISE C. HASTINGS

All animals do not take a long nap during the winter. Those whose food is abundant are active and hungry. Some of them police the woodland, the orchards and fields the year around. Do you know who some of these all-year-round policemen are. They are the weasel, mink, otter, wild cat, fox, and owl. As "traffic cops," they serve Mother Nature well. They are on duty every night and often in the daytime, and they allow no animals to pass them unless there is a good reason.

Of this group the weasel is the one that does the most work. He not only kills for food, as do the others, but he is so blood-thirsty that he keeps on killing. Looking at his actions from the point of view of nature, we find that he does not overdo his work and that he fills his place well and does what he is supposed to do.

All animals do not work the same way, nor do they all eat the same diet, but each one is a part of God's great plan and does the work he is made for. By working overtime the weasel is a good friend to the farmer.

Do you know why Mother Nature needs these policemen night and day? It is a law that no one species shall overtop another species. If there were no weasels, foxes, and owls, the animals which they eat for food would not be checked, and they would cover the earth. Most of the animals caught for food are rodents, and rodents are vegetarians. So if they were not checked, the farmer's crops would be eaten, trees would die, and man would suffer.

It is a wonderfully planned world in which we live!

It's not alone at Christmas,

But all the twelve months through,
That the joys you give to others

Return again to you.

MARLIVE STETSON.

THE BEACON CLUB

The Editor's Post Box

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

315 ESSEX AVE.,
CHEVY CHASE, MD.

Dear Editor: I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club and wear its pin. I go to the Unitarian Church of Washington, D. C. I was twelve last week. I am in the eighth grade. My Sunday-school teacher's name is Mrs. Harden. Our minister is Dr. U. G. B. Pierce.

I would like to correspond with some girl about my age, eleven, twelve, or thirteen.

I have never been to Boston but hope to go soon.

Sincerely yours,
ELEANOR GISH.

12 MONADNOCK CT.,
KEENE, N. H.

Dear Editor: I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club and wear its pin. I read *The Beacon* every Sunday and enjoy it. Two winters ago I went down South, to Florida. I had a very nice time. I am nine years old.

Yours truly,
EVANS DAGGETT.

423 WAYNE ST.,
KANSAS CITY, MO.

Dear Editor: I want to join the Beacon Club. I am in the second grade at school. I am seven years old. I go to the Unitarian Sunday school.

Yours truly,
HENSLEY MECKER.

Junior Workers

In Clinton, Mass., a church-school class studying *The Bible and the Bible Country*, found the lessons so interesting that they organized a "Junior Work" group with their teacher as leader.

During the devotional service at their weekly meeting they supplement the regular Junior Service with a review of the church-school lesson for the previous Sunday.

Many other interesting things are done by Junior Workers, whose active minds and nimble fingers respond readily to suggestions which help to broaden their outlook and their usefulness, thus making them valuable assets to our parishes. They are affiliated with the General Alliance Committee on Junior Work and are privileged to wear the U. J. W. (Unitarian Junior Workers) pin.

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.
OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.
OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

The Committee on Junior Work, with headquarters at 25 Beacon Street, will be glad to assist anyone interested in this work, and also hopes that some of the active "Junior Work" or "Junior Alliance" branches will respond to the suggestion in the following poem from a newly organized group:

Clinton is our home town,
Love it we always will;
In Worcester County, of renown,—
Now listen, all ye from the hills,
To us, a class of church-school girls,
Of ages over eleven, who through "Junior Work"
Now hope our goal to win.

Jolly Junior Workers are we,
On Friday nights we meet;
Like busy bees we work and seek
Little ways to make life bright,
Yet always we try to do what's right.

Just now we're busy at our work
Until our Fair, which will be given
Near Christmas. Oh, none can shirk
In ways to help, for we have striven
Our best to do, and we do trust
Returns will show our reward is just.

"We all will try to do our best,"
Our motto is, and every time
Repeated at our meetings with zest
Keeps us happy as we climb
Ever onward, forward, upward;
Ready to help the sick and poor.
So all who see this, letters please forward
to

The Jolly Junior Workers,
63 Prospect Street,
Clinton, Massachusetts.

Happy New Year

By FLORENA A. HAYLER

Who is this little fellow
So full of joy and cheer,
Who comes on fairy tiptoes
When nights are cold and clear?

He brings new faith and courage
To sad and weary hearts,
And to each one a blessing
Of hope and love imparts.

He bids us all be thinking
Of good that we may do;
And, dancing gaily, wishes
Us "A Happy New Year!" too.

Puzzlers

Geographical Acrostic

Place the words as you guess them, or find them in your geographies, one below the other. When you have found the correct words the first letters will spell a place loved by all Unitarians.

1. A country in Europe.
2. A lake in Maine.
3. A cape off England.
4. One of the Great Lakes.
5. Capital of California.
6. State of northwestern United States.
7. Peninsula of the United States.
8. A Scandinavian country.
9. Capital of Hawaii.
10. One of the Great Lakes.
11. Capital of Texas.
12. Small country of the western part of Africa.
13. Large country of Asia.

M. L. C. H.

Twisted Names of Boys

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| 1. Brorte | 6. Pphiil |
| 2. Kfnar | 7. Mstaoh |
| 3. Lmwliia | 8. Yhner |
| 4. Errog | 9. Heojps |
| 5. Twlrae | 10. Thenenk |

MARGARET FORD.

Word Square

A wild animal
Repose
Small venomous serpents
Peace

E. F. B.

Answers to Puzzles in No. 11

Charades of Amity.—1. Friendship.
2. Handshake.

Hidden Trees.—1. Willow. 2. Pine. 3. Oak. 4. Elm. 5. Pear. 6. Peach. 7. Plum.

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